



Newcomer Tour of Norfolk County



Student Start Up Program participants



Tourism & Economic Development

Annual Report 2019

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Executive Summary



A joint meeting of Norfolk and Haldimand Chambers of Commerce, Boards of Trade and BIAs

Collaboration was the focus of 2019, with various regional and local teams working together to assist with various aspects of economic development in Norfolk County.

The Economic Development Strategy Review was completed and approved by Council in 2019. Over 2,000 online participants and hundreds of attendees at round tables across Norfolk County helped to write the strategic directions of our five-year plan: (A) Help Entrepreneurs to Expand Wealth and Prosperity, (B) Harness Community Energy to Improve Public Spaces, and (C) Welcome Youth and Newcomers to Grow the Population and Workforce.

From the development of a new Chamber / Business Network to a popular multi-sector job fair, various organizations worked with Norfolk County to demonstrate the benefits of unity and togetherness. Phase One of

the Simcoe Gateway sign project was completed with the assistance of many community-minded organizations in the town.

Another collaboration saw Norfolk County shine at the Terroir Symposium in Toronto, where almost 1,000 culinary influencers got to know our food, farmers and chefs better.

Staff continued to focus on business visits in 2019, meeting on-site with more than 90 firms. Monthly meetings continued with chambers of commerce and other business associations to nurture relationships in local towns.

Community Improvement Plan business incentives continued to be popular in 2019, with 12 projects funded. With funding from Norfolk County and the Province, these incentives helped trigger more private-sector investment in improving our downtowns.

Enquiries about industrial development continue to be received by Norfolk County staff. FIGR Norfolk purchased 11 acres to build an 800,000 sq. ft. cannabis production facility to employ 400 workers in Simcoe. Autofeed purchased almost 3 acres to build a new advanced manufacturing operation in Simcoe, employing 12.

Ten workshops to help business were organized in 2019; over 200 attended. The Annual Symposium was again a success. Richard and Angela Van Laecke of Horizon Seeds were named Entrepreneur of the Year. Sarah Lawrence was named Young Entrepreneur of the Year.

The Student Start Up Program (SSUP) supported 10 student businesses with funding. One of the participants, Alexis Miller-Cluckie, went on to win the Simcoe & District Chamber of Commerce Student Startup Award.

Marketing and communications work was boosted with financial support from Norfolk County's Marketing Partners, which numbered 265 at the end of 2019. Tactics ranged from digital to print, with online ads reaching more than a million people. Email newsletters helped engage clients. Agriculture News experienced the fastest growing

subscriber base, up 33% to 739 contacts compared to last year, followed by Development News, up 26% to 1,262 contacts. Website page views grew past 600,000 for norfolktourism.ca. Social media channels operated by staff logged about six million facebook impressions, and over 500,000 twitter impressions. Videos attracted 50,000+ views with assistance from our live broadcasts and the new Passionate Folks of Norfolk interviews.

Distribution of the annual Experience Guide and Map was reduced in 2019, due to budget constraints. However, through a collaboration with the Ontario's South Coast Wineries & Growers Association, 140,000 newspaper inserts were distributed to urban centres in shoulder seasons.

Media relations continued with staff hosting 3 travel writers / bloggers. Currently, 31 marketing partners also participate in the tourism-oriented directional signage program. The Visitor Services Program was terminated.

The Agriculture Advisory Board and Tourism and Economic Development Advisory Board continued to meet in 2019, providing solid advice to Norfolk County Council.



Business Visit at Henderson's Powder Coating

Business Incentives & Supports

Business Visitation / Business Retention & Expansion

Staff visited approximately 90 businesses in 2019 (down from 300 visits in 2018) in the agriculture, manufacturing and tourism industries. Visitation is integral to business retention and expansion. Main objectives are twofold: assist businesses ready to capitalize on existing opportunities (market or product expansion, job creation) and identify those facing challenges and point them toward possible incentives, reliefs or solutions.

Staff take both a proactive and reactive approach in conducting visits.

Proactively, businesses are targeted that met eligibility requirements for recently announced government programs.

Reactively, companies that reach out to us seeking our assistance with challenges they were facing are also given our full attention. This “push-pull” strategy of engaging with our businesses will continue.



Black Creek Music – Before and After

Community Improvement Plan Incentives

In 2019, 12 projects (compared to 17 in 2018) were funded with incentives for non-residential property owners. The one-time only Urban Renewal Partnership of \$24,000 supported by the Province funded four projects in downtown Simcoe, and the ongoing Community Improvement Plan (CIP) tax levy incentives budget of \$95,000 funded eight projects.

Building Façade Improvement

- 2100055 Ontario, \$3,936 (CIP)
- Jordan Gawley, \$4,585 (CIP)
- GNK Properties Ltd., \$12,060 (Urban Renewal)
- Lanny Horne, \$5,100 (Urban Renewal)
- McKay Holdings, \$250 (Urban Renewal)

Agricultural Buildings & Facilities

- Charlotteville Brewing Co., \$9,000 (CIP)

Landscaping, Signage, Property Improvement

- Delhi Radio, \$1,335 (CIP)

Property Tax Increment Grant

- 2364112 Ontario Ltd., \$7,147 (CIP)
- Van Amerongen & Son, \$34,273.60 (CIP)

Structural Improvement

- 8194688 Canada Ltd., \$20,000 (CIP)
- Dover 13 Wines and Spirits, \$15,000 (CIP)
- Norfolk Dental Hygiene, \$6,680.56 (Urban Renewal)

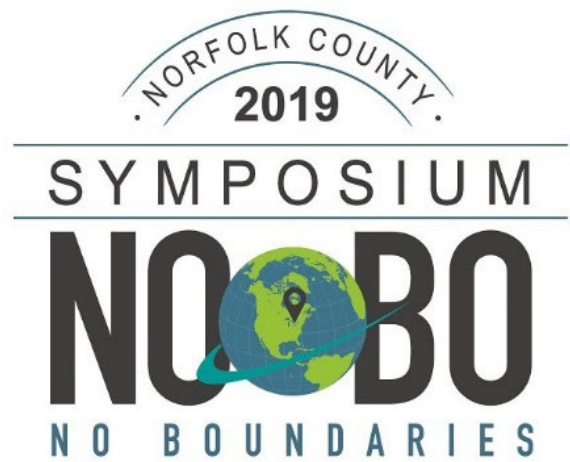
No funds were granted for Architectural Design, Environmental Remediation, Planning Application Fees, Building Permit Fees or Residential Conversion.

Workshops & Networking Events

Economic Development Symposium

Staff organized the 12th annual Economic Development Symposium (#NCSym19) on February 7, 2019 with the theme “Norfolk: No Boundaries” at the Port Dover Community Centre. There were 258 registrations (up from 200 in 2018). Masters of Ceremonies: Amélie Chanda and Jason Mayo. Keynote Speaker: Brian Williams, Kindess Ninja. Other speakers: Christine Dainard, Mike Fredericks, Michelle Kloepper and Nick Kokkoros. The Made in Norfolk Showcase highlighted products manufactured Norfolk County. Also, a world map featured local companies that export internationally.

Sponsors: Norfolk County, Millards, Venture Norfolk, Libro Credit Union, Fanshawe Community Career and Employment Services, BDC, TD Bank, First Ontario Credit Union, Westwood Trails, Vallee, David’s Restaurant, Mechanical Contractors Association Hamilton Niagara. In-Kind Sponsors:



MyFM, Ontario South Coast Wineries & Growers Association, Simcoe Reformer, Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show, Norfolk Fruit Growers Association, Sunflower Films. Prize Donors: Norfolk County, Ride the Bine, Routes to Roots Film Festival.

Award Winners

Entrepreneur of the Year: Richard and Angela Van Laecke, Horizon Seeds

Young Entrepreneur of Year: Sarah Lawrence, Sayza Hot Yoga

Jerry Sucharyna Memorial Student Start Up Award: Kieran Gubesch

Travel Writer of the Year: Kathryn Dickson

OSCWGA Wine Excellence Award: Erie Beach Hotel

LPWBR Sustainable Tourism Award: Long Point Island Hugger Tours



Gordon Malo of Good Redden Klosler presented on Succession Planning in January 2019

Business Workshops

In 2019 the Department hosted ten business workshops in cooperation with Venture Norfolk. Over 200 local business owners and stakeholders attended. A survey was coordinated at year end to provide feedback on content, presentation and timing.

- **Succession Planning** (January), 40 registered
- **Tax Tips for Small Business** (February), 18 registered
- **All You Need to Know About Exporting** (March), 13 registered
- **Government Incentive Programs** (April), 45 registered
- **Experiential Tourism Packages** (May), 36 registered
- **Hiring Foreign Trained Workers** (June), 31 registered
- **Social Media Workshop** (September), 22 registered
- **Mind Your Business: Effective Business Management** (October), 9 registered
- **Cyber Security** (November), 8 registered
- **Interest-Free Loans for Farmers** (December), 36 registered

Business Relationships



Alexis Miller-Cluckie (left)

Business Associations

Staff regularly attend monthly meetings and other events of the Delhi BIA, Delhi Chamber of Commerce, Long Point Country Chamber of Commerce, Port Dover Board of Trade, Simcoe BIA, Simcoe Chamber of Commerce, and Waterford Chamber of Commerce. Staff also have face-to-face meetings with volunteers and staff.

Among the events attended by Department staff was the annual Simcoe Chamber of Commerce Awards Night. We are proud that Alexis Miller-Cluckie (a participant in the Student Start Up Program) was the winner of the Simcoe Chamber's Student StartUp Award.

Film and Television Production

In 2019, the Department's "Film Liaison Office" assisted six film and television productions, including Tailgate Talent, Disasters At Sea, and CBC's Still Standing.

Development Process

Pre-Consultation Meetings:

Department staff attend pre-consultations meetings with new developers and provide comments on planning application reports.

Expediting Development Approvals:

Staff worked with Senior Management on options to expedite development applications, including a rethink of the Green Light Team launched at the Symposium in February 2019. The appointment of a permanent General Manager for Development and Cultural Services in 2020 will help facilitate a streamlined model for development approvals.

Zoning By-Law Updates: Department staff worked with Planning staff and Advisory Boards to provide opinion on policy changes. In 2019, amendments included approval to add flexibility for on-farm wineries, breweries and distilleries. Work also continued on exploring policy alternatives to allow for tiny homes.

Youth Engagement



Student Start Up (SSUP Norfolk) Recipients 2019

Student Start Up Program (SSUP Norfolk)

The goal of the Norfolk County Student Start Up Program (SSUP) is to provide a chance for Norfolk County's next generation of business owners to get real-world experience throughout the summer that they will use later in life during their post-secondary careers.

In 2019, the fourth annual staging of the program was launched on July 4 in Council Chambers. Deputy Mayor Amy Martin presented 10 student businesses with \$200 each in start-up funds. The businesses included photography, car-cleaning services, jewelry makers, greeting cards, yard clean-up services, and camp firewood sales. Students had the opportunity to attend at least two pre-arranged marketplace events to

receive \$50 each. Seven student businesses submitted a final report to receive an additional \$100.

A mentorship session was organized for the students on August 8 at the Whitehorse Bowling Lanes in Simcoe. Students were given the opportunity to outline their successes and challenges and to share best practices with each other. General Manager of Venture Norfolk, Kristine Carey, was the mentor who provided guidance, encouragement and motivation for the students. Marketplace support for the program was received from farmers markets in Simcoe, Port Rowan and Waterford as well as the Ice Cream Festival in Simcoe and Norfolk County Ram Rodeo.

Investment Attraction

Industrial Park Land

Norfolk County owns 12 hectares (30 acres) of land in the Judd Industrial Park – four hectares (ten acres) of which are reserved for a G72018/UNESCO National Tree Planting Project initiative. The remaining property has been actively promoted for sale and Department staff continue to field enquiries for development here. The profile of potential developers is very restrictive due to the Provincial source-water protection regulations that apply to these parcels of land.

In 2019, all six parcels identified in the remaining eight hectares (20 acres) were optioned or sold to companies planning to expand or relocate in Norfolk County and employ additional workers here. The land has been surveyed, the plan has been registered and the design of the road with the necessary utility services has been awarded. The completion date of the new road – to be called Haycock Way – is scheduled for summer of 2021.

Staff continue to receive development inquiries for vacant industrial land or buildings and staff are in the process of developing an industrial land strategy to proactively address the development demands from outside investors. With our business foundation routed in

agriculture, we will continue to look for value-added opportunities in the food processing industry as well as general manufacturing. With the adoption by the Province of Norfolk County's revised Official Plan with the new zonings for industrial land staff will actively pursue the prospects of preparing those lands into investment ready parcels as part of our investment targeting.

Autofeed Corp.

Established in Hamilton in 1988, Autofeed manufactures machine integrators as well as parts handling equipment and service. The company had outgrown its current space and was seeking a location to establish a second division, and selected Norfolk County. Autofeed purchased a portion of land approximately 1.2 hectares (2.85 acres)



for the construction of a 930 m² (10,000 sq. ft.) manufacturing plant. Construction is estimated to be completed in 2021.

The company anticipates expansion of the initial building within five years of completion and are projecting an employment roster of 12 highly-skilled workers.

FIGR Norfolk Inc.

FIGR Norfolk Inc. (formally Goldleaf Pharm Inc.) is a licensed cannabis producer that has been operating in Norfolk County since 2018. The company currently owns a 1,860 m² (20,000 sq. ft.) production facility employing 22 workers in Judd Industrial Park. Their new purchase will result in the construction of a 74,320 m² (800,000 sq. ft.) production facility that will create over 400 jobs. Construction is expected to take 18 months. FIGR owns

majority stakes in two Canadian cannabis producers – Canada's Island Garden in Charlottetown, Prince Edward

Island, and Goldleaf Pharm Inc. in Simcoe. Co-founder Larry Huszczo's company is purchase 4.61 hectares (11.39 acres) of county-owned lands for the expansion of his business.



New Resident / Business Attraction

Newcomer Tour

On June 11, 2019, Department staff hosted 45 newcomers from the Toronto area. Our partner agency, Newcomer Centre of Peel, said this was the largest ever group to visit a rural area in Ontario. They were greeted by Councillor Ryan Taylor in Council Chambers, then toured communities, Unilever and Burning Kiln Winery. They had lunch at The Beach House in Port Dover and drove past other employers and amenities.



Newcomer Tour of Norfolk County, June 2019

Empty Storefront Tour

The Downtown Simcoe Empty Storefront Tour was held on July 23, 2019. Thanks to Gail Bouw of Coldwell Banker Big Creek Realty who worked with other realtors and Department staff to organize this event.

Over 60 people registered for the joint open houses at 3 commercial property locations (Peel St, Norfolk St S, Water St). There were 55 visits logged in total at all locations. Staff are willing to work with property owners and real estate professionals on a repeat event in Simcoe or other communities.



Storefronts on Water Street (above) and Peel Street (below) were featured on the tour.



Collaborative Projects

Simcoe Gateway Sign (Phase 1)



Mayor Chopp, community sponsors, volunteers and Norfolk County staff unveiling Simcoe Gateway signs

On May 28, Norfolk County Council, community sponsors, volunteers and staff unveiled two of the four new gateway signs scheduled for replacement in Simcoe.

The new signs – which were constructed by Brooks Signs of Brantford and are located on Highway 24 North and South – will feature the County Administration Building and Carillon Tower. The phased replacement of the four gateway signs to Simcoe is scheduled to be completed by 2020. Funding for the project is a joint initiative between Norfolk County and each community,

who fundraise to match the corporation's budgeted funds.

The Rotary Club of Norfolk Sunrise, Rotary Club of Simcoe, Simcoe Lions Club, Knights of Columbus, Simcoe & District Chamber of Commerce, Gentlemen of Harmony, Royal Canadian Legion and Downtown Simcoe BIA all donated \$1,000 to the project.

Norfolk County also contributed to the cost. Coordination for the design, fundraising and installation were spearheaded by the Simcoe Gateway Sign Committee.



Norfolk Chamber / Business Network

The Norfolk Chamber / Business Network met on July 3 for its first joint meeting. Groups invited were Delhi BIA, Downtown Simcoe BIA, Delhi District Chamber of Commerce, Long Point Country Chamber of Commerce, Port Dover Board of Trade, Simcoe & District Chamber of Commerce and Waterford Chamber of Commerce. Three communities attended. On September 11, Norfolk County and Haldimand

County organized a joint session of all BIAs, boards of trade and chambers of commerce across the two municipalities. Caledonia, Cayuga, Delhi, Dunnville, Hagersville (host), Jarvis, Long Point Country, Selkirk, Simcoe and Waterford attended. They discussed Attracting Visitors to Downtowns, Strategies for Landlords to Improve Properties, Increasing Volunteer Participation. The next meeting in November.

Multi-sector Job Fair

Fanshawe College Community Career & Employment Services and County staff worked on a multi-sector job fair on April 30, 2019, to help match job-seeking workers with vacancies in our communities. 70 employers met with 500 job-seekers.





Norfolk County Ambassadors at the Terroir Symposium in Toronto, May 2019

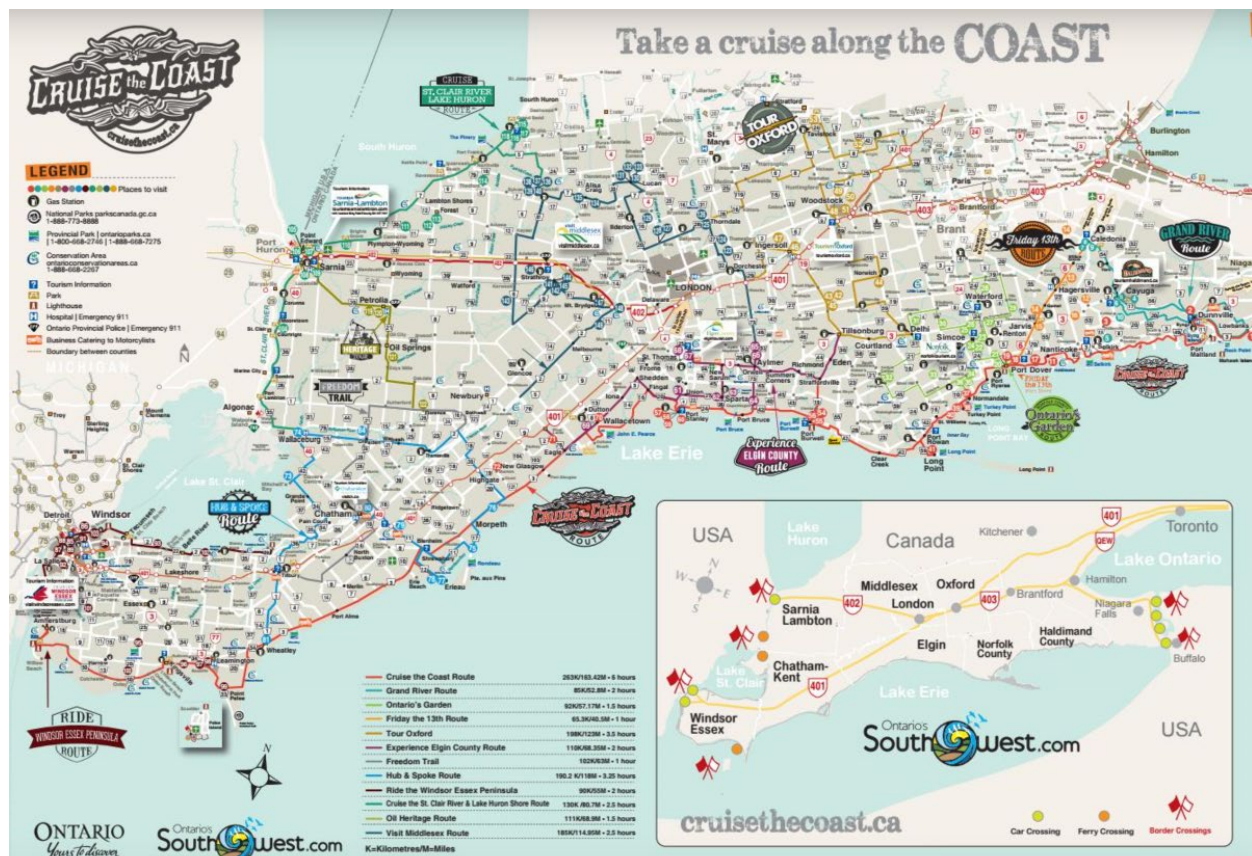
Terroir Symposium

On May 6, Norfolk County was front and centre at the Culinary Tourism Alliance Terroir Symposium in Toronto as a premier destination for food and drink lovers. About 950 hospitality and tourism influencers including chefs, hoteliers, drink experts, writers and business leaders attended to discuss the latest industry trends. Breakfast at the event was sponsored by Norfolk Tourism, Southwestern Ontario Tourism, David's Restaurant and Ontario's South West Wineries & Growers Association. Chef Scott McRae prepared three flavours of breakfast pizza and yogurt featuring ingredients from Matz Fruit Barn, Simcoe Farmers Market, VG Meats, and granola from The Good Bread Co. Other foods served were 20 dozen apple cider donuts from the Norfolk Fruit Growers Association, strawberries from EZ Grow

Farms, fresh apple cider from The Cider Keg Farm Market spiked with ginseng tea from Norfolk ginseng growers, and popcorn from Ontario Popping Corn Co.

"It was all positive," said Remi Van De Slyke, a member of Norfolk's Agriculture Advisory Board and president of the Ginseng Growers of Ontario. "We were one of the few regions that was represented there and the interest in what we had and what we were serving was quite profound."

Being part of the festivities has been a major coup for the county, said Van De Slyke: "I'm glad Norfolk County goes to that because it really puts our name out there and gives us some traction going forward."



Cruise the Coast Map 2019

Other Collaborations

Venture Norfolk

Norfolk County staff have a very positive relationship with Venture Norfolk, a Community Futures Development Corporation funded by Industry Canada. Norfolk County is grateful to Venture Norfolk for supporting the Student Start Up Program, Young Entrepreneur of Year Award, our advisory boards, and providing meeting space.

Motorcycle Tourism Alliance

The Ontario South Coast Tourism Alliance (Cruise the Coast) targets motorcycle enthusiasts. Staff produced

the 2019 motorcycle map, website (cruisethecoast.ca) and led the Toronto motorcycle show exhibit, working with other offices across the region.

Ontario South Coast Wineries & Growers Association

Department staff worked with the Ontario South Coast Wineries & Growers Association to help promote Norfolk's wine and craft brewing industry. Part of this collaboration includes editorial coverage and grouped listings in the annual Guide/Map. Staff spoke at the Association's 10th Anniversary this year.



Back Alley Cleanup Day - Simcoe BIA

Downtown Revitalization

Staff worked with the Downtown Simcoe Business Improvement Area to expedite several downtown revitalization initiatives, including streetscape improvements, lighting, security cameras, public Wi-Fi, back alley cleanup (August 8), mural painting, and other projects. Collaborating agencies included BIA, Simcoe & District Chamber of Commerce, Norfolk Planning, Heritage & Culture, Housing, By-Law Enforcement, Public Library, Public Works, and OPP. The Downtown Revitalization team met July 21, September 12 and October 31 and discussed issues such as by-law enforcement, policing, homelessness, housing, garbage pickup, secondary plans, parking, upcoming events, and more.

“We Make It Here” Manufacturing Video

For the third year, Norfolk County was a sponsor of the “We Make it Here” feature videos about manufacturing employment opportunities in the community. Manufacturers highlighted in this year’s video include On Time Precision Components, Lone Star Welding and Cadman Equipment. The video were a collaboration of Norfolk County, the Workforce Planning Board of Grand Erie, and neighbouring economic development offices.



Scene from “We Make It Here”

Manufacturing Day

On October 3, Norfolk County participated in the Manufacturer’s Month which introduces 200 high school students to career opportunities in local manufacturing companies. This is an opportunity where students get an opportunity to identify jobs in the skills trade as well as highly skilled positions. Cadman Manufacturing, Townsend Lumber and Toyotetsu participated.



Potential Alternative Accommodations

Alternative Accommodations

Staff worked on the “Guide for Starting and Operating an Alternative Accommodations Business” project, in cooperation with peers in Haldimand County and Elgin County and Southwest Ontario Tourism Corp. (SWOTC). The Guide will be launched early in 2020. Department staff serve on SWOTC’s Destination Marketing Organization Council and Marketing Committee.

EmployerOne Workforce Survey

Each January, Department staff work with the Workforce Development Board of Grand Erie to encourage as many employers to participate – large and small, public and private – across Norfolk, Haldimand, Brant, Brantford, Six Nations and New Credit. Department staff in Norfolk were honoured to be the third most active referral organization (among 23 agency partners in the initiative) resulting in dozens of Norfolk employers participating.

Economic Developers Council of Ontario

Norfolk County is a member of the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO). International investors, site selectors and developers refer to EDCO when searching for possible locations in Ontario. Staff attended the annual conference to build professional development, learn best practices, and network with peers to find solutions to challenges. During 2019, staff worked on the Bright Ideas Competition with peers from Bruce County and Toronto on “Progressive Downtowns through Retail Revitalization”. The results will be presented at EDCO’s 2020 conference.

SCOR Advocacy Efforts

SCOR (South Central Ontario Region Economic Development Corporation) is a non-profit body directed by politicians from Brant, Tillsonburg, Norfolk, Middlesex and Malahide, each granting \$25,000 to SCOR. Staff attended the AGM, SCOR board meetings in Norfolk, and provided input to the SCOR Mayors’ visit to the Association of Municipalities of Ontario (AMO) Conference.

Western Ontario Wardens

Norfolk County is a member of the Western Ontario Wardens Caucus (WOWC), a not-for-profit organization representing 15 upper and single tier municipalities in southwestern Ontario. The purpose is to enhance the prosperity and wellbeing of the region.

Marketing & Promotion

Marketing Partner Program

As of December 2019, 265 Marketing Partners were enrolled as Partners (279 in Dec 2018). Annual fee is \$179 + HST.

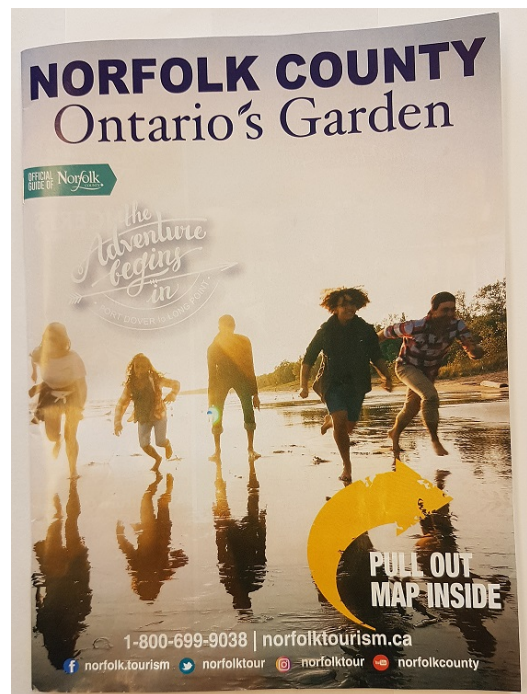
Partner Program Benefits

- One basic listing in next edition of Norfolk County Experience Guide/Map
- One full listing on norfolktourism.ca website for 12 months
- Post news items about and events organized by Partners on norfolktourism.ca
- Promote Partners in consumer email newsletters and on social media

Advertising & Promotion

Experience Guide / Map

Due to budget reductions, the print run of the 2019-20 edition of the Norfolk County Map & Guide was reduced to 30,000 copies from 75,000 (2018). Page count was reduced to 48 pages from 68 (2018). Materials were transferred to new Corporate Communications Department for design and printing bid call. Distribution plan was reduced to Ontario Tourism Info Centres only, not to attractions and hotels outside Norfolk County. Guide content was reduced to listings for Partners. The detailed map of Norfolk County was continued. Advertisers also offset some cost.



Norfolk County Experience Guide & Map 2019

Content Generation

Norfolk County staff post news stories about partners and experiences our websites. Posts are promoted on social media and curated and published in email newsletters.

Promotions

In 2019, staff worked with the Norfolk County Fair and the Ontario's South Coast Wineries & Growers Association on promotions for tickets to events.

Digital Advertising

Facebook ads generated 1.6 million impressions and 17,000+ clicks. Google ads generated 520,000+ impressions and 1,300+ clicks. Weather Network ads resulted in 250,000 impressions and 350+ clicks. TripAdvisor ads were suspended in 2019 due to budget reductions. TripAdvisor groups 11 town and village pages with related businesses and attractions under Norfolk County on their website. Non-ad clicks from TripAdvisor to norfolktourism.ca were 226 in 2019, less than 10% of previous year's clicks.

Toast Ontario's South Coast Newspaper Inserts

In cooperation with Ontario's South Coast Wineries & Growers Association, Norfolk County continued its presence in targetted inserts distributed in spring and fall 2019 to 140,000+ subscribers of Globe and Mail newspapers in Southern Ontario, Hamilton Spectator, London Free Press and Kitchener Record.

Gift Boxes and Baskets

In 2019, 163 gift baskets or boxes were prepared featuring local goods and food products (down from 278 in 2018). Each basket or box included a number of local food products from Norfolk County businesses. This initiative helps promote the bounty of Norfolk County.

Lake Erie Living

Due to budget reductions in 2019, advertising was reduced in Lake Erie

Living magazine, aimed at visitors from Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania and New York. Advertising was focused only on the Travel Guide published in the spring, but no other editions. Editorial staff are very enthusiastic about Norfolk County, frequently mentioning and highlighting Norfolk County marketing partners.



Norfolk County advertised in the OSCWGA's Inserts

Local Publication Advertising

Ads were placed Lighthouse Festival Theatre Program, Norfolk Farms (Media Pro Publishing), Doverlicious Passport, Port Dover Maple Leaf, Port Rowan Good News, Simcoe Reformer, Simcoe & District Real Estate Guide.



Media Relations

Department Staff hosted 3 travel writers and bloggers during the 2019 season (18 in 2018). These included Marisa Mercanti and Aaron Gagnon (The Daydream Diaries), Karolyn and Muge Ellacott (Ontario Travel and dobberrnationloves) and Chris Mitchell (travelingmitch.com). Each of these social media influencers visited Norfolk County for three days and two nights, with personalized itinerary preparation and hosting. Collective social media reach of these influencers include Pinterest (2,583), Twitter (16,312), Instagram (52,600) and Facebook (379,484).

Media Releases

Norfolk County issues media releases from time to time highlighting specific stories and announcements. Media releases are usually directed to local and regional media.

Travel Writer of the Year Award

2019 Winner was Kathryn Dickson of KathrynAnywhere.com for “Family Friendly Fun in Norfolk County”. Kathryn has 4,300+ Instagram followers, 4,000+ Twitter followers and 500+ subscribers on YouTube. Due to budget reductions, the program has been suspended.

Email Marketing



Norfolk Flavours

6,021 subscribers (5,993 in 2018)
37 editions (41 in 2018)

Average Open Rate: 30%
Average Click Rate: 27%

A survey of subscribers to Norfolk Flavours in fall 2019 found that 64% visited Norfolk County because of something they read in the email newsletter. The newsletter spurred them to visit Port Dover, Simcoe and other parts of Norfolk, wineries, restaurants, breweries, and the Norfolk County Fair.

Norfolk Development News

1,262 subscribers, up 26%
7 editions (10 in 2018)
Average Open Rate: 47%
Average Click Rate: 40%



Norfolk Agriculture News

739 subscribers, up 33%
10 editions (12 in 2018)
Average Open Rate: 43%
Average Click Rate: 39%





Signage

Area Profile Signage

Norfolk County leases Area Profile signage from Canadian TODS, the Province's tourism signage agency. These signs are Hwy 403 East and Hwy 24 South, Hwy 6 south of Jarvis, and Hwy 3 East, west of Tillsonburg.



Tourism Directional Signage

31 Partners participate in our Directional Signage program accounting for 74 signs (30 Partners / 70 signs in 2018). This marketing tool is designed to assist visitors find local businesses in rural areas. The program operates on a cost-recovery basis and is reserved for tourism operators who are Marketing Partners. StripeArt is sign maker of record. The Roads Department assists with sign locations and installations.

Other Signage

In 2019, the electronic notice board on the sign located at Queensway West and Cedar Street in Simcoe broke down. The repair budget was pushed to 2021. The sign has been utilized by not-for-profit organizations to promote events.



Norfolk County Tourism Facebook Page

Social Media

Facebook

Department staff operate several Facebook pages for promotion of tourism and economic development activities. Two Department Facebook pages attract the most traffic (data as of January 9, 2020). Other Department pages include Norfolk Flavours, Norfolk County Young Professionals, SSUP Norfolk, Delhi, Port Dover by Norfolk Tourism, Long Point, Simcoe - Norfolk County, Ontario, Turkey Point, Vittoria, Waterford.

Norfolk Tourism

@norfolk.tourism

3,909,500 impressions (down 39%)

6,219 followers (up 18%)

61% are women ages 25-64

Origins: Local, Brantford, Hamilton, Toronto, London, United States.

Invest Norfolk

@investnorfolk

1,562,655 impressions (up 68%)

2,189 followers (up 42%)

56% are women ages 25-64

Origins: Local, Brantford, U.S, Hamilton, London, Toronto



Norfolk County Economic Development Twitter Profile

Twitter

Norfolk County Tourism

@norfolktour, 5,190 followers (up 3%)
 379,000 impressions (down 53%)
 65% female
 Top Origins: Local, U.S., Toronto, U.K.,
 Brantford, Hamilton, London, Waterloo
 Interests: dogs, science news, weather,
 sporting events, music fests, technology

Norfolk County Econ Dev

@investnorfolk, 2,045 followers (up 3%)
 155,000 impressions (down 5%)
 66% female
 Top Origins: Local, U.S., Toronto,
 Brantford, London, Guelph, Waterloo,
 Hamilton, U.K.

Norfolk Flavours

@norfolkfarms, 2,357 followers (up 1%)
 9,800 impressions
 64% women
 Top Origins: Local, Toronto, U.S., U.K.

The @norfolkfarms account will be shut down in 2020. Twitter followers will be encouraged to follow @norfolktour.

Instagram

Norfolk Tourism

@norfolktour, 3,434 followers (up 38%)
 138,000 impressions (down 46%)
 74% women ages 25-44
 Top Origins: Local, Toronto, Hamilton

Trade Shows, Events & Activations

Motorcycle Show

Held in January 2019 in Toronto, Norfolk County worked with Haldimand County and Elgin County to profile motorcycle tourism opportunities at the Canadian Motorcycle Super Show, a consumer event that attracts 50,000+ visitors. The 2019 Cruise the Coast Motorcycle Map was launched here.

Cycling Show

Cycling outfitters and businesses in Norfolk County were not interested in coordinating a presence at the Toronto Cycling Show, so the 2019 exhibit did not happen.



Eat & Drink Norfolk tokens

Epoch Ontario Travel Expo

Due to budget reductions, staff did not attend this trade show catering to the Chinese-Canadian tourism market in the Toronto area.

Eat & Drink Norfolk

Staff organize a presence at Eat & Drink Norfolk annually to promote local food and drink in Norfolk County. The Norfolk

Agricultural Society is a generous collaborator on this initiative. The three-day event attracts a large number of locals and tourists, providing an excellent venue to market our area.

Cleveland Motorcycle Show

Norfolk County staff did not attend the Cleveland Motorcycle Show in January 2019 to promote the Cruise the Coast brand, due to a new policy by Council prohibiting staff from travelling outside the province for work. Representatives of Elgin County, Middlesex County, Sarnia-Lambton, Chatham-Kent and Windsor-Essex promoted the Cruise the Coast Map at this show, the third largest motorcycle show in the U.S.

FlavourFest

Due to budget reductions, Norfolk County was not able to provide a promotional cloth bag for FlavourFest at the Norfolk County Fair & Horse Show. The exhibit is organized by Fair staff.

Springarama

Norfolk County sponsors this event, coordinated by the Simcoe Chamber of Commerce. The Department advertises on the bag handed out to attendees.



Kerry Bockenholt (right) of Waterford was one of many Passionate Folks of Norfolk County featured in videos

Video & Live Broadcasts

Passionate Folks of Norfolk

Staff in cooperation with Amélie Chanda, Active Living Ambassador for Norfolk County, revamped the live broadcasts and blog posts to focus on citizens who are particularly passionate supporting their community in Norfolk County. Six episodes of Passionate Folks generated reach of 35,000+ and average click rate of 45%.

Live Broadcasts

Food/ Drink Ambassador Jason Mayo presented live broadcasts on the Norfolk Flavours Facebook page. Ten episodes generated reach of 15,000+ and average click rate of 39%.

Department staff also posted live Facebook broadcasts last year. In total, seven broadcasts generated reach of 35,000+ and average click rate of 90%.

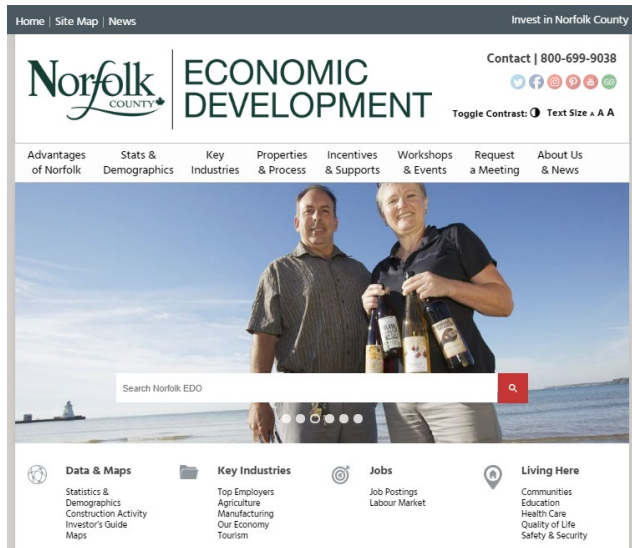
Top 3 videos for 2019

1. Feb 24: **High winds causing flooding** (0:15), 12,780 reach, 2,955 min. viewed, 130% click rate
2. Sep 3: **Passionate Folks: Adam Van Paassen** (5:01), 8,797 reach, 3,900 min. viewed, 44% click rate
3. Nov 6: **Passionate Folks: Scott McRae** (5:18), 7,324 reach, 2,500 min. viewed, 15% click rate

Video Library

Norfolk County owns an extensive library of video footage featuring towns, landscapes, beaches, trails and farms. Footage at youtube.com/norfolkcounty can be used free of charge by video editors and TV producers for inclusion in productions. Clips can be requested with two conditions: Norfolk County Tourism must be credited in the final video, and producers cannot resell the video footage supplied by Norfolk County.

Websites



norfolkbusiness.ca

52,721 page views (down 0.7%)
 35,054 web sessions (up 2%)
 87% new visitors
 Desktop 46%, mobile 45%, tablet 9%

Origin: Local (down 12%), Toronto (up 13%), U.S. (up 22%), Hamilton (up 1%), Brantford (up 1%), London (up 26%), Brant (up 24%), Kitchener (down 26%), Tillsonburg (up 8%), Mississauga (up 15%), Brampton (down 45%), Ottawa (up 31%), Woodstock (up 8%), Waterloo (down 10%), Guelph (up 46%), Norwich (up 51%).

Acquisition: Organic search (53%), social (17%), referral (12%), direct (11%), email (7%)

Popular pages: home, workshops, properties available, incentives, tiny homes, cannabis, symposium.



norfolktourism.ca

605,561 pageviews (up 14%)
 363,464 web sessions (up 24%)
 83% new visitors
 Mobile 53%, desktop 35%, tablet 12%

Origin: Toronto (up 28%), local (up 7%), Hamilton (up 17%), U.S. (up 8%), Brantford (up 9%), London (up 13%), Kitchener (down 18%), Mississauga (up 15%), Brant (up 17%), Woodstock (up 11%), Burlington (up 21%), Brampton (down 26%), Waterloo (down 5%), Ottawa (up 36%), Montreal (up 52%)

Acquisition: Organic search (65%), direct (12%), social (11%), referral (7%), email (5%)

Popular pages: webcam*, events, home, winter promotion, Port Dover.
 *Webcam on lighthouse is the most popular page on norfolktourism.ca.
 Pageviews increased 86% in 2019.

New Resident Packages

Staff provided copies of the Norfolk County Guide / Map to be placed in New Resident Packages distributed by the Corporate Support Services Department. In 2018, 265 New Resident Packages were distributed.

Visitor Services

Due to budget reductions, three summer staff were not hired in 2019 to provide Visitor Services to tourists in Port Dover, Port Rowan, and other locations and events. Phone service and Wi-Fi were terminated. Surplus mobile devices were returned to the Information Technology Department. The pedal-assist bicycle was transferred to the By-Law Enforcement Department for use by summer officers. The Tourism Van was transferred to the Public Works vehicle pool. Staff worked with Long Point Country Chamber of Commerce to enable volunteers to continue service in Port Rowan. Senior Leadership at Norfolk County agreed to continue to pay for utility costs (power) at the Port Rowan booth via Public Works Fleet and Facilities Department.

Customer Service

Norfolk County responds to many information requests annually, providing travel advice, directions and referrals to our partners. When someone requests printed material to be sent, the enquiry is fulfilled using Canada Post or Purolator courier.

Telephone / Texts: Calls are received on 800-699-9038 or 519-426-9497. Texts are received on 519-427-6586.

Email: Emails are received via contact forms on our websites or directly at tourism@norfolkcounty.ca and business@norfolkcounty.ca.

Social media: Messages are also received through social media outlets: facebook and twitter. These enquiries include engagement through conversations on social media, which sometimes occur outside of office hours.

Walk-ins: Walk-in enquiries are accepted during office hours year round in Simcoe. At the Robinson Administration Building, there is a reception display area with brochures for Norfolk County area and surrounding area, promoting marketing partners and other businesses. Signage leads motorists to this location.



Project Oversight Team: Gail Bouw, Pam Duesling, Olivia Collver, Dusty Zamecnik, Clark Hoskin and Nick Kokkoros

Strategy, Measurement & Success

New Economic Development Strategy

In June 2019, Council approved the municipality's third economic development strategy, prepared by Department staff based on community consultations in 2018-19 (document available at norfolkbusiness.ca/strategy). Summary directions and focus areas are outlined below. See Appendix for Economic Development Strategy realigned under Council Strategic Directions approved in July 2019.

- A. Help Entrepreneurs to Expand Wealth and Prosperity**
 - 1. Enhance municipal regulations, processes and communication
 - 2. Support existing growth businesses
 - 3. Attract emerging industries
- B. Harness Community Energy to Improve Public Spaces**
 - 1. Support downtowns as attractive places to visit and invest
 - 2. Improve relationships and communications
 - 3. Increase participation by citizens in community projects
- C. Welcome Youth and Newcomers to Grow the Population and Workforce**
 - 1. Connect our workforce to job opportunities
 - 2. Connect workers with housing and amenities
 - 3. Attract new residents

Performance Measurement

Targeted marketing programs and activities are evaluated for effectiveness and return on investment through tracking website visits via social media analytics, enquiries, visitor services, and earned media placement. Visitation data may assist with evaluation of marketing initiatives. Feedback from Marketing Partners on an ongoing basis is also essential to evaluate performance.

Subject to budget approval in 2019, as recommended in the Economic Development Strategy, Norfolk County will enroll in the World Council on City Data as an ongoing performance measurement comparator. Currently 17 municipalities in Canada are participating in this new, globally recognized ISO standard.

Evidence of Success

In 2019, Norfolk County received an Honourable Mention for the Best Technology and New Media Marketing Award from the Economic Developers Council of Ontario (EDCO) for the Live Broadcast Ambassador initiative.

Norfolk County's Tourism and Economic Development office has won numerous provincial and national marketing awards over the years. They are listed on our website at norfolkbusiness.ca/awards.



In February 2019, EDCO President Alison Newton presented Norfolk County Graphic Designer Tracy Haskett with the Honourable Mention for Best Technology / New Media

Our staff are called upon frequently to speak to other communities as an example of a best practice in tourism, local food promotion and economic development.

Advisory Boards

Agriculture Advisory Board (AAB)

Members of AAB in 2019 were Mike Bakos, Mike Berkel, Anita Buehner, Anthony De Carolis, Hayden Dooney (Vice Chair), Trish Fournier, James Hill, Remi Van De Slyke, John Picard, Ann Vermeersch and Dusty Zamecnik (Chair). Mike Columbus is Council Liaison and Clark Hoskin is Staff Liaison.

AAB Mandate

The mandate is to (A) advise Council on matters pertaining to agricultural issues in Norfolk County; (B) develop alliances and partnerships between individuals, businesses, organizations and government through financial and other means to advance the County's strategic plan for agriculture; (C) provide a forum for discussion and coordination of agricultural initiatives and programs with other community groups and agencies.

AAB Issues

Issues discussed this year included On-Farm Septic Systems, Road Entrance Permits, Importing Soil, Lot Relocations, Wetlands, Foreign Worker Video.

Tourism & Economic Development Advisory Board (TEDAB)

Members of TEDAB in 2019 were Amanda Dooney, Cathy Gilvesy, Nicole Inglis, Wanda Heimbecker (Vice Chair), Janice Ketchen, Michelle Kloepper (Chair), Matt Suckel, Cindy Vanderstar and Chantal Zorad. Ian Rabbitts is Council Liaison. Clark Hoskin is Staff Liaison.

TEDAB Mandate

The mandate is to (A) advise Council on matters pertaining to tourism and economic development issues in Norfolk County, in order to sustain and expand the vitality of the municipality's economic base; (B) develop alliances and partnerships between individuals, businesses, organizations and government through financial and other means to advance the County's strategic plan for tourism and economic development; (C) provide a forum for discussion and coordination of tourism and economic development initiatives and programs with other community groups and agencies; and (D) act as the Planning Advisory Committee for Norfolk County.

TEDAB Issues

Issues discussed this year included Symposium Planning, Entrepreneur of the Year Award selection, Student Start Up Award, Marketing Partner Program / Municipal Accommodation Tax, Provincial Policy Statement Review, Accessory Residential Dwelling Units (Tiny Homes), Municipal Grants, Youth Member on TEDAB

Appendix

Realignment of Economic Development Strategy under new Council Strategic Directions

In 2019, Council hired Boulevard Strategy Group to prepare new Strategic Directions for the Corporation, which were approved by Council in July. Staff subsequently realigned recommendations of Economic Development Strategy under Council's priorities.

Council Priority 1: Vibrant, Creative Communities

A. Address vacancies in the downtown through programs and incentives for redevelopment and occupancy

1. Focus community improvement programs on projects with highest return and geographic areas of highest need (A/2/g/)
2. Encourage property standards and beautification of public spaces (B/1/a/)
3. Coach property owners to enhance development and gentrification (B/1/b/)
4. Explore solutions to social challenges (B/1/c/)
5. Create spaces for creative individuals to network and collaborate (B/1/d/)
6. Provide opportunities for home-based businesses to move into storefronts (B/1/e/)
7. Increase compatible nightlife by expanding tourism experiences (B/1/g)
8. Organize events and space making experiences (B/1/h)

B. Facilitate and promote a diverse and attractive mix of housing options to increase affordability

1. Explore housing alternatives for employees (A/1/e/)
2. Develop opportunities for housing options that employees, youth, retirees and newcomers can afford (C/2/a/)

C. Create an environment where volunteers and service clubs will thrive and improve the community

1. Inspire citizens to bring forward ideas for projects that boost involvement (B/3/a/)
2. Provide training for volunteers in collaborative leadership (B/3/b/)
3. Ask youth for solutions, then make them happen quickly (B/3/c/)
4. Increase volunteerism with a centralized database and coordinator (B/3/d/)
5. Explore ways to support collaboration among service clubs (B/3/e/)

Council Priority 2: Optimal Place for Business

A. Facilitate new programs to support agricultural innovation across Norfolk County, including a new agricultural innovation hub

1. Review municipal agriculture property taxes (A/1/f/)
2. Prioritize food processing, tech-related agriculture, culinary and sustainable tourism (A/2/e/)
3. Prioritize food processors that value our terroir and use Norfolk County bounty (A/3/c/)
4. Build an agri-food showcase and culinary-tourism centre (A/3/f/)
5. Promote on-farm diversified uses of appropriate size and scale (A/3/h/)

B. Foster an environment for growth and innovation, creating new partnerships and new approaches

1. Connect businesses to funding and other supports (A/2/a/)
2. Support young entrepreneurs and small business (A/2/b/)
3. Host small business workshops (A/2/f/)
4. Explore business incubators and investment platforms (A/2/h/)
5. Provide opportunities for more overnight tourist accommodations (A/2/i/)
6. Grow overnight tourism spending in the off-season (A/2/j/)
7. Establish a startup protocol for new businesses (A/3/a/)
8. Prefer companies that value work-life balance and our quality of place (A/3/b/)

9. Encourage development with high-paying jobs / workers who live in Norfolk County (A/3/d/)
10. Host industries from target markets and nearby cities (A/3/e/)
11. Grow spending by film, television and media producers (A/3/j/)
12. Explore legal cannabis-themed tourism experiences (A/3/k/)
13. Increase business to business communication (B/2/b/)
14. Explore opportunities and connections for business unity across Norfolk County (B/2/c/)
15. Consult major employers and assist in addressing labour shortages (C/1/a/)
16. Improve links between school boards and businesses (C/1/c/)
17. Collaborate on job recruitment drives (C/1/d/)
18. Build on relationships with existing workers, including seasonal farm employees (C/1/e/)
19. Encourage youth to return to work in Norfolk County (C/3/a/)
20. Collaborate with immigration programs to attract new employees (C/3/c/)
21. Attract newcomers by collaborating with agencies, employers, realtors and builders (C/3/d/)

C. Create a Norfolk branding and marketing strategy

1. Consider taxing tourists to fund tourism marketing and development (A/1/g/)
2. Celebrate business successes (A/1/h/)
3. Promote quality of life and local tourism to attract new residents (C/3/b/)

Council Priority 3: Quality Infrastructure

A. Find innovative and cost-effective new approaches to engineering, leveraging private sector knowledge and resources

1. Enhance amenities such as accessibility for disabled persons, public washrooms, beach improvements, gardens, public art, boat dockage, etc. (A/2/k/)
2. Utilize technology to support traffic and parking solutions (A/2/l/)

B. Approve and invest in a strategy to address water and wastewater management and unlock potential for future development

1. Explore new solutions to energy generation, water and waste management (A/3/g/)

C. Continue to build partnerships to improve access to broadband internet throughout Norfolk County

1. Enhance access to high-speed communications (A/2/d/)

D. Work with the community to build an accessible, inclusive Community Hub as a critical amenity for community revitalization and post-secondary partnerships

1. Optimize recreational, natural and cultural opportunities (B/1/f/)
2. Attract more post-secondary education programs (C/1/b/)

E. Facilitate innovative new public transit solutions that address rural realities and economies of scale

1. Enhance amenities such as accessibility for disabled persons, public washrooms, beach improvements, gardens, public art, boat dockage, etc. (A/2/k/)
2. Support unique transportation modes to link population centres and tourist nodes (A/3/i/)
3. Ask youth for solutions, then make them happen quickly (B/3/c/)
4. Use technology to expand public transit and other services (C/2/c/)
5. Link public transit to major cities (C/2/d/)

Council Priority 4: Focus on Service

A. Streamline processes for development applications, building permits, special events permits and licensing with line of sight to a common sense approach

1. Prioritize land-use approvals for employment-generating developments (A/1/b/)
2. Refine community festival and event planning (A/1/d/)

B. Modernize Norfolk County's approach to by-law development and enforcement

1. Review policies, identify opportunities and streamline processes (A/1/a/)

C. Redevelop the County's customer service practices and systems to improve the client experience

1. Boost customer service (A/1/c/)
2. Assist businesses with their opportunities and challenges through regular visitations (A/2/c/)

Council Priority 5: Solid Foundations

A. Assure oversight and accountability for the County's finances through strategies that include multi-year operating budgets, multi-year capital plans, asset management, variance reporting and high return on investment for the Legacy Fund

1. Review policies, identify opportunities and streamline processes (A/1/a/)

B. Build a strategic approach to managing facilities, addressing deferred capital maintenance and divesting assets and buildings that are no longer strategic for the County's long term needs

1. Centralize amenities and infrastructure to serve changing needs (C/2/b/)

C. Become a partner with private sector innovators and create an environment where it is easy to do business with Norfolk County through reduced requirements and streamlined procurement practices

1. Review policies, identify opportunities and streamline processes (A/1/a/)
2. Grow collaboration between business associations and local government (B/2/a/)

D. Foster an engaged workforce that is empowered to find savings, efficiencies and continuous improvement

1. Review policies, identify opportunities and streamline processes (A/1/a/)

Staff Team

As of December 31, 2019, the Norfolk County Tourism and Economic Development team includes the following staff in the Development and Cultural Services Division:

Tourism and Economic Development Department

Clark Hoskin – Director, Tourism & Economic Development

Chris Garwood – Economic Development Supervisor

Ted Willey – Business Development Supervisor

Lorraine DeSerrano – Marketing Assistant

Vacant – Economic Development Analyst



Norfolk County

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